

Act Three of Hamlet is a complicated one; it has many underhanded comments, a framed narrative, and confusion that leads to murder.

One of the things I noticed is a parallel between Hamlet asking Horatio to Observe Claudius with him "I prithee . . . pay the theft" (III.ii.83-95) and Polonius suggesting he observe Hamlet for Claudius "Tis meet that some audience more than mother, /since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear/The speech of vantage"(III.iii.34-36).

Hamlet suggests Horatio watch Claudius so there is someone else to help determine if Claudius is in fact guilty. Hamlet realizes he will subconsciously be looking to incriminate Claudius, so he needs someone impartial like Horatio to help him.

Conversely Polonius feels that Gertrude, being Hamlets mother will see only the good in her son and not analyze the situation properly. In both instances the characters recognize that one's sight can be distorted by their own personal feelings.

In scene two I noticed Hamlet makes a lot of underhanded remarks, which while rude, have deeper implications. Ophelia say to Hamlet that he seems merry tonight, in response he says "O God, your only jig-maker. / What should a man do but be merry?

/For look you how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father dead within's two hours"(III.ii.132-135). On the surface this may seem like a harsh remark to Ophelia (who we know he is already upset with), but in reality it shows how really all Hamlet can think of is his mothers betrayal of his father. The actors in the play also reiterate feelings of betrayal. The Queen in the play says, "Such love must needs be treason in my breast"(III.ii.201), which refers to her love for the man who murdered her husband. Even small quips underscore Hamlets anger that his mother has abandoned her love for his father. Ophelia says, "Tis brief my lord." (III.ii.174) to which he replies "As woman's love"(III.ii.175).

Hamlet is not the only characters in scene two who make insightful and snide remarks. In response to an explanation given by Hamlet Ophelia says "You are as good as a chorus, my lord"(III.ii.26) Which hints at the fact that Hamlet is merely pretending to be insane, he is, in essence acting as well, although Ophelia might not realize this truth behind her words. (I found this funny so I added it) Hamlet asks Polonius if he acted at University, and Polonius replies that he "I did enact Julius Caesar. I was killed I' th'

Capitol. Brutus killed me"(III.ii.110). This foreshadows Polonius untimely and brutal death, which will occur in scene four.

The only thing I really found of worth in scene three was the fact that Hamlet will find almost any excuse to prolong the murder of Claudius. "Now might I do it pat ... sickly days"(III.iii.76-101). While some might see his reasoning to be vicious, Hamlet simply wants Claudius to die in a state of Sin; I see it more as Hamlets way of avoiding acting upon a promise he wishes he didn't have to keep (Sort of like Malfoy having to kill Snape in Half Blood Prince). His feelings get stronger the longer he thinks about it, he is convincing himself to delay the murder, and giving himself a justifiable reason. Basically scene three shows Hamlet is torn between choosing to kill or not kill Claudius.